

The War Paper for Women

VOTES FOR WOMEN

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

VOL. VIII. (Third Series), No. 352.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1914.

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(A well-known literary man, in a letter to the Press on the subject of a possible German invasion, speaks of the readiness of untrained elderly men at least to shoulder the ambulance stretchers, and adds, "and our women-folk will as calmly and quietly pad the shoulder straps that they may not hurt us." Our cartoonist depicts the effect produced on our women-folk when approached with such a request by an imaginary Poet.)

POET: "Prithee, fair lady, of thy gentleness soften the harshness of these straps which do even gall my shoulders."

WOMAN (pointing to her oppressed sisters): "All these are my care. When you have lightened our burden by giving us the protection of the vote, we shall have both time and power to lighten yours."

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DEDICATION

To the brave women who to-day are fighting for freedom: to the noble women who all down the ages kept the flag flying and looked forward to this day without seeing it: to all women all over the world, of whatever race, or creed, or calling, whether they be with us or against us in this fight, we dedicate this paper.

THE OUTLOOK

Parliament rose last Friday, and will not sit again until the first week in February. This removes even the slight protection that is available for women against the persecution of those in authority, who can at least be made to answer in the House for their various acts of aggression where the voteless are concerned.

Cardiff Casts the First Stone

Instant advantage has been taken of the adjournment. The very next day—that is, last Saturday—five prostitutes were court-martialled at Cardiff under the recently passed Defence of the Realm Act, for disobeying an order issued by Colonel East, which prohibited women of their class from being out of doors between the hours of 7 p.m. and 8 a.m. The women pleaded guilty, police evidence was given, and the finding of the Court was communicated to the general commanding the district, who confirmed the sentence of sixty-two days' detention. One of the women made the horribly pathetic remark, "Seven o'clock seemed so early—it seemed like a dream to me." Two of the others, who evidently did not treat the matter with the terrified humility expected of them by their military judges, were told that "under the Defence of the Realm Act offenders were liable to any punishment not exceeding three months' imprisonment." So this despicable business seems to have been made possible by one of the Emergency Acts recently rushed into law by a Parliament responsible only to the men of the country.

Are the Troops also Prohibited?

We have given the bare facts as reported in the *South Wales Daily News*, which also states that Colonel East has prohibited all women from being on licensed premises between the hours of 7 p.m. and 6 a.m. We do not know how long women will be allowed to breathe in Cardiff, but pending their total extinction by order of Colonel East we should like to ask this question: Are the troops also forbidden to be in the streets or the public-houses within the proscribed hours? If they are, and if the sole object of the commanding officer is to purify the streets for the perambulating citizens of Cardiff, we should like to know if soldiers who disobey the order have to undergo sixty-two days' detention? If they are not, and this hypocritical attack upon the liberties of women has been made in order to preserve the men from temptation, we want to know why the whole political power of the State is vested in the hands of what is apparently the weaker sex.

Only One Guarantee for Women

One fact that emerges from this shameful incident is that there is no guarantee for the safety of women except their immediate enfranchisement. Mr. Asquith's assurance to the Women's Freedom League that the provisions

of the C.D. Acts would not be revived either in letter or spirit has been followed by the passing of an Act which has made it possible to court-martial women whom the present atrocious social and economic system has driven on to the streets. He has refused this week to receive a deputation on the subject from the Women's Freedom League, the United Suffragists, the East London Federation of the Suffragettes, and the Northern Men's Federation. Mr. Henry W. Nevinnson, in a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* denouncing the Cardiff court-martial, says: "It has often seemed to me lately that at the present rate we shall have to begin the struggle for humanity and freedom all over again when the war is done." Unless women are enfranchised by that time, these words will certainly come true.

Impertinent Supervision

The Cardiff outrage is the culminating incident in a kind of general attack that has been made upon the liberties of women since the outbreak of war, inspired by an unholy alliance between the War Office and the Home Office. The order placing soldiers' wives under police supervision has not been withdrawn, and we cannot endorse Mr. Baker's statement in the House of Commons on November 25 that the intention of the War Office

is not to place the wives of all soldiers under police supervision, but to convey a timely warning of the results of misconduct in cases in which the need for warning has become evident.

At least one case has come to our notice in which a soldier's wife, who is a strict teetotaler, has been subjected to a visit of inquiry from a police inspector. Such investigation would appear to us equally impertinent and unwarrantable if the woman were a drunkard, for she has as much right to her State wage as the soldier who drinks has to his pay. The mystery in which the whole proceeding is wrapt would alone condemn it in the eyes of every honest man or woman; and Mr. McKenna's "hope," expressed in answer to a question by Mr. Barnes, to be able to state the terms of the revised circular before the adjournment of the House seems to have been conveniently left unfulfilled.

War Office Recognises Women Doctors

A victory has been won for women in the medical profession by the recognition of the Women's Hospital Corps at Wimereux by the R.A.M.C. It will be remembered that the Corps, under the direction of Dr. Louisa Garrett Anderson, originally established itself at the Hotel Claridge, Paris, as a French Red Cross Hospital, working under the French Government. The hospital took wounded British as well as French soldiers, and its efficiency was such that when Dr. Garrett Anderson, leaving Dr. Flora Murray in charge of the Paris hospital, moved with part of the staff to Wimereux, the new establishment was recognised officially by the British Government. Only British soldiers are received at the Wimereux Hospital, which is answerable to

the War Office, draws army rations, and is in all respects a Government hospital. We hope to publish an account of it, by one who has recently visited it, in our next issue.

Insurance for Women

The report has just been issued of the Departmental Committee appointed last August to enquire into the excessive claims for sickness benefit under the Insurance Act. It contains these points of special interest to women:

(1) That the only remedy for excessive payments to badly paid women workers is the effecting of such an improvement in their economic conditions as to make sickness benefit less attractive; (2) That it is impossible to maintain a distinction between pregnancy and other causes of sickness, and therefore a new benefit should be created payable during the last four weeks of pregnancy, whether the woman is incapacitated or not; (3) That the household work allowed to be done during this period be clearly indicated.

While we approve the general tendency of the proposed reforms, we recognize the danger of their administration while women remain a politically helpless body (as seen particularly in the third point mentioned). It is therefore worth noticing that Mr. W. P. Wright (Manchester Oddfellows) appends a note urging that the women's benefits be administered solely by women officials, and that Miss Macarthur adds a memorandum denying that these minor reforms can be effective, and calling for a Royal Commission on Maternity to deal with the whole problem.

Items of Interest

The Suffrage cause has lost a warm adherent in Miss Fanny Brough, who, we deeply regret to hear, died last Monday. One of the occasions on which she identified herself with the movement was when she opened the Woman's Press shop in Charing Cross Road in the summer of 1910.

Speaking at the Kingsway Hall on Monday evening Mrs. Pankhurst suggested that one cause of the decline in recruiting might be the numerous advertisements offering employment to young men that could easily be given to the many women now out of work.

In the course of asking a question in the House, Mr. Yeo spoke of women engaged in making saddle-covers for the Army who are earning about one penny an hour, and 2d. to 3d. an hour on ground sheets, and that others engaged on clerical work earn about 9s. 10d. per week of fifty-nine hours at a well-known firm doing Army work. Mr. Baker promised "investigation."

The Guardians must seek new ways of expressing patriotism. The Lambeth Board decided at last week's meeting that the Poor Law children should have their egg on Christmas Day after all; and the resolution of the Yarmouth Board, moved at the annual meeting of the Association of Poor Law Unions, last Friday, to reduce the workhouse dietary on account of the war, was lost by a large majority.

The Home Secretary had a gleam of sound sense when he refused to confirm the recommendation of the Southampton Licensing Justices that intoxicating drink should not be served to women after 5 p.m.

Volume VII. of VOTES FOR WOMEN is now ready, price 10s. 6d., and may be obtained from the Publisher, 4-7, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, E.C. Everyone should take this opportunity of securing an accurate record of the Suffrage movement in 1913-14. Subscribers supplying their own copies can have these bound for 6s. 6d.

BOOKS RECEIVED

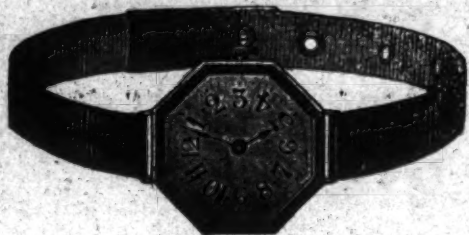
"Whispers." By Mrs. Baillie Weaver (London: Hurst and Blackett. Price 6s.).
 "The German Danger." By Bart Kennedy. (London: Holden and Hardingham. Price 1s. net.).
 "Sir J. French. An Authentic Biography." By Cecil Chisholm, M.A. (London: Herbert Jenkins. Price 1s.).
 "The Englishwoman." December. (London: Evans Bros. Price 1s.).
 "Above the Battlefield." By Romain Rolland. (Cambridge: Bowes and Bowes. Price 6d. net.).
 "The Church in Relation to the Women's Movement." By Lt.-Commander J. N. Cather, R.N. (London: Church League for Women's Suffrage. Price 1d.).

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Mrs. PAYNE (Bow),
Mrs. MANSELL - MOULLIN.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1914.

THE SCANDALOUS CIRCULAR

Our readers will remember that there has been not even a Government promise to withdraw finally and completely, to consign to that outer darkness from which it ought never to have been brought, the scandalous circular which instructed policemen to enquire into the "worthiness" of soldiers' wives. All we have been told in the House of Commons—and all we are likely to be told for months, now that the House has seen fit to adjourn until February—is that the circular has been temporarily withdrawn for modification of wording. We have reason to believe that, whatever may have happened to the wording, the spirit of the document is actually being translated into fact at the present moment. We hear of a soldier's wife being visited by a police inspector and cross-questioned as to her mode of life. We have naturally no means of knowing how much of this sort of thing is going on, but that it should go on at all is a scandal and an outrage.

Let us recapitulate the points as to the police methods in question. Since when has "worthiness," in the sense of the morality of private life, been made a condition of receiving money legally due? For nothing less than that is the condition which two great Government departments, the War Office and the Home Office, have threatened to impose. A member of Parliament draws his salary without rendering an account to the police of the amount he drinks; you pay your coal-bill without examining into the sexual morality of your coal merchant. But how are soldiers' wives to be treated? A married man is urged to enlist. He feels that his country needs him, and he goes. Now one of the perfectly explicit pledges the Government makes to this man and his wife is that so much a week shall be paid to the wife as separation allowance. That is one of the inducements held out; that is one of the printed conditions of the bargain. No talk about "worthiness" or "unworthiness" here. The husband is not tempted with the promise that his wife shall be spied upon; he is not allured with the dazzling hope that his wife shall be tripped and tumbled into starvation. These enticements to patriotism are not placarded on hoardings nor flaunted on taxicabs. They are not mentioned at recruiting meetings. They are not shouted on parade. They are modestly hidden away in a police circular of whose very existence, but for the patriotic

action of the *Daily News* in dragging it to light, the country might as a whole be ignorant. So the Government gets its recruit on a definite bargain. If it then proceeds to break that bargain on any plea whatever, if it withholds what it is pledged and thrice-pledged to give, it is guilty of common theft, and would be guilty of it if every soldier's wife in the Kingdom were as "unworthy" in the eyes of the police as many policemen are in the eyes of soldiers' wives.

In the second place, of what does "unworthiness" consist, and how can anyone decide where it exists? Even if there were, in law or decency or commonsense, such a thing as being "unworthy" to have your just dues paid to you, where could the line be drawn, and what person, not being mad or hired, would undertake to draw it? What is deadly sin to governors and officials may, to God, be the occasional backward slip in a heroic upward struggle. What is righteousness to Cabinet Ministers may show as filthy rags to a clearer vision. Have these precious officials and issuers-of-circulars ever, we wonder, read the New Testament? Have they heard of Scribes and Pharisees and Governors and High Priests? We understand that great distributions of Bibles are to be made to the soldiers; we hope some of the Bibles will get no further than Whitehall.

As for the police, we say deliberately, and on the strength of actual knowledge, that we can imagine no more degrading condition of affairs than that a woman's subsistence should depend on the approval of the police. Anybody, however ignorant of facts, can see at a glance what a scope for every kind of nagging, bullying, frightening, and humiliating the whole business opens up. Moreover, more precious to a poor woman than the gold she seldom touches and the rubies she never sees are the pride and privacy and sanctity of herself, the dignity of her womanhood. If every policeman were an angel with shining wings, he could not touch that dignity without soiling it.

Lastly, what do the wise Home Office and the thoughtful War Office plan for the future of the "unworthy" women? Suppose a soldier's wife, while her man perhaps is gasping out his life in blood amid the noise and ruin of battle—comforting himself perhaps in his last moments with the thought that his wife is secure in a grateful country's hands—suppose that soldier's wife has been convicted, by the secret enquiries of policemen, of "persistent and repeated misconduct," of "immorality," of "drunkenness"? Suppose the grateful country, blandly and besottedly satisfied with this method of enquiry, has stopped the allowance it promised her? To whom in her "unworthiness" is she to turn? Not always, alas! in such circumstances will she find a Christian welcome from the local representative of Christ. Most charitable societies, we fear, will be readier with reproof than with charity. No employer of labour will employ her unless it is physically impossible for him to get anyone else cheaper; if he does employ her it will rarely be at a wage fit to support herself and her children. Outdoor relief will probably be unattainable for her: the workhouse means separation from her children, and even an "unworthy" woman sometimes loves her children. "But fear not, gentlemen of England" (so we might have said a few weeks ago), "even short of the river (for attempting to drown themselves in which your laws would punish them) there is always one place for women to turn to, at any rate until they are so worn and ill and near to death that it really doesn't matter what happens to them. You may starve them out of their homes and shut them out of the public-houses, but you will scarcely, we think, prevent them from walking in the streets."

So we should have said. And now in Cardiff the streets are being shut to women whom policemen consider "of a certain class." Well, there is always prison for even the most unfortunate.

HER HUSBAND'S SOCKS

By D. A. LOVELL

Young Mrs. Desmond poured herself out a second cup of coffee and read the letter through again. How, she asked herself, was she to give her help? It was hard to refuse, and the case sounded terribly sad; but business was bad, food was dear, and money scarce. Besides, charity was a thing she disliked on principle; she would rather pay for work to be done, if she could, but what work had she to give?

Her eyes rested upon the basketful of mending she intended getting through before nightfall; and for a second the idea suggested itself that she might give it out to be done—then she shook her head. No fingers but her own had touched her husband's things from their wedding day, just a year ago, until now; and she had promised herself again and again as she bent over the darning of those big holes that none ever should. It was just a morsel of sentiment she permitted herself to indulge in; those well-worn socks were sacred in her eyes. She must think of some other plan.

"The poor old soul could do any kind of plain needlework, and would be delighted with even a shilling. When I left her she seemed to be in utter despair."

Mrs. Desmond folded the letter, and rose from the table. She had made up her mind; the contents of the basket should go without delay; the darning she was so proud of must be replaced by another's stitches.

"Anyhow," said she to herself, as she gently folded each article into a big piece of brown paper; "I shall be free to get to my pitch to-morrow. I will order two dozen papers to-day and see if I can get rid of the lot in an hour and a half."

The papers were going well. The day was bright, with just that nip of Autumn about it to give the passers-by a generous spirit. Mrs. Desmond had parted with her twelfth, and was holding up the thirteenth with a triumphant little smile upon her face, when someone from behind gave her arm an angry pull.

"Wot yer doin', 'oldin' up a thing like that? Git 'ome and mend yer 'usband's socks."

She had heard the words often before, and had laughed at them many a time as she crossed and re-crossed with her needle those troublesome heels; but to-day they seemed to hurt her. She turned and looked after the speaker, who was already shambling away, a little, old person in a threadbare jacket and trailing skirt.

"Don't be so stupid," said Mrs. Desmond to herself. "Fancy being hurt by an ignorant old woman like that!"

It was evening. Mrs. Desmond had drawn a big chair up to the fire, and had placed her husband's shoes in readiness before it. Everything was in apple-pie order awaiting the advent of the master of the house, but instead of his well-known step upon the path, there came a halting, shuffling sound, followed by a ring at the bell.

"It's an old woman," announced the little maid, stiffly. "She says she wants to see you, so I've left her in the hall."

Mrs. Desmond followed her from the room. "I've brought back the things, ma'am," said the woman in the doorway. "I've mended the lot, and I 'opes you'll be pleased with 'em."

She placed the package on the nearest chair and received her payment with greedy delight.

"God bless yer, ma'am," she murmured, earnestly. "If 't 'adn't bin for you a-givin' of me them things to do, I'd ha' died o' want, I would indeed, ma'am."

As she moved away the light from the hall fell full upon the threadbare jacket and trailing skirt.

"One moment," Mrs. Desmond called, and the old body turned round. "I had intended mending my husband's things myself from now," she continued, looking the woman straight in the face. "It seemed to me only right that I should. What do you think?"

"It's 'ard on old folks like us, ma'am," said the woman, with a sniff, "when those 'oo can afford to give it out does it theyselves."

"I thought perhaps it was my duty," Mrs. Desmond said, slowly. "But if you will come to my VOTES FOR WOMEN pitch in King Street next Thursday between eleven and one, I will have another parcel ready for you."

"God bless yer—" began the woman, and then stopped. Mrs. Desmond saw the look of recognition coming into the sharp old face, and the firm jaw drop a little. "Why, so it wur!"

She heard the words muttered in an undertone, and smiled to herself as she held out her hand.

"There! Don't trouble about that," she said, kindly. "It is getting late, and you look tired. Don't forget; between eleven and one. But," she added, out of pure mischief, "if by any chance I am not there, you will know that I have decided to darn the socks myself. Good-night!"

AXIOMS FOR ANTIS

An Anti's argument is made up of points. A point is that which has neither depth, breadth, nor impressiveness.

A straight lie is the quickest means of escape from one point to another.

A lie may be produced any number of times.

In the same speech and from the same speaker there shall not be more than six repetitions of the same thing.

Male Antis who make a point of the superfluous, single, elderly female, are said to be themselves superfluous, single, and elderly.

Male Antis who make a point of the non-combatant female are said to be themselves non-combatants.

The "physical force" arguments, though you stretch them ever so far both ways, will not do nowadays.

An obtuse Anti is one who believes that his party is greater than the Suffrage party.

An acute Anti is one who knows that his party is less than the Suffrage party, and acts accordingly.

When an Anti asserts that the feeling of the country is against the enfranchisement of women, he is said to be talking gup, since the whole is greater than its parts.

Ten Liberal stewards, forty plain clothes policemen, and seven hundred hooligans are (sometimes) equal to one Suffragette.

Two Suffragettes are equal to the Houses of Parliament.

The Suffrage party is equal to anything.

T. O'Meara.

NEW BOOKS

MRS. PANKHURST'S BOOK *

In this book Mrs. Pankhurst tells, with a simplicity and dignity far more effective than any literary artifice could be, the story of her own life as expressed in, and identified with, the suffrage movement. Beginning with the early influences that educated her innate passion for freedom, she comes on quickly to the formation of the W.S.P.U., the Government dishonesties and delays which invited and incited extreme opposition, and the political history of militancy. "To support by word or deed a Government hostile to woman suffrage is simply to invite them to go on being hostile. We oppose the Liberal party because it is in power. We would oppose a Unionist Government if it were in power and were opposed to woman suffrage." These sentences form the essence of the political argument which runs through the book. No one, we venture to say, has a right to question the validity of that argument without first following out the practical reasons for it and the practical expression of it in the woman suffrage movement. (We need not remind our readers that in the present crisis the political warfare of the W.S.P.U. has been turned to truce.)

The long years of what Mrs. Pankhurst justly calls "peaceful militancy"; the infinite patience of those whom the Press derided as "hysterical maniacs," under every form of insult and ill-usage; the savage sentences imposed on women for the slightest and most technical breaches of the peace; the horrors of forcible feeding; the outburst of what Mrs. Pankhurst calls "the Women's Revolution"; the so-called "conspiracy" trials; the regularity with which, year after year, a hostile Government (of which half falsely professed friendship) killed Suffrage Bills to which the House had assented; the broken promises of "facilities" for the Conciliation Bill; the chance of amendment to the Manhood Suffrage Bill, solemnly guaranteed and cynically refused; the persistent deluding and frustrating of legitimate claims—all these things form a record only too bitterly familiar to most suffragists, but none the less

worth re-telling for that: a record moreover which, we hope and believe, will bring a knowledge of the facts and a sense of proportion to many thousands who now lack both the one and the other.

What will most impress all readers is the extraordinary impartiality, the objectivity, with which the story is told. Incidents in which Mrs. Pankhurst has been insulted and ill-treated by men of the basest kind are here recorded with a detachment, a superhuman lack of personal bitterness and resentment, that one would think could scarcely fail to arouse admiration even in the men themselves. No one who is in any doubt or ignorance as to the spirit in which women have been militant, the logical causes of their militancy, has a moral right to leave such a book as this unread.

OLIVE SCHREINER ON WAR *

Those who admire Olive Schreiner's work—and there are many such among our readers—will gladly welcome the charming little six-penny edition in which two well-known chapters from two of her books have just been issued by Messrs. Fisher Unwin. They are called "The Sunlight lay across my bed," and "Woman and War," the first being taken from "Dreams," and the second from "Woman and Labour." The chapter on war and its connection with women is incomparably the finer of the two in our opinion, and it appears at an appropriate moment. "We pay the first cost on human life," she says, and so works up to the following passage:—

It is not because of woman's cowardice, incapacity, nor, above all, because of her general superior virtue, that she will end war when her voice is fully, finally and clearly heard in the governance of states—it is because on this one point, and on this point almost alone, the knowledge of woman, simply as woman, is superior to that of man; she knows the history of human flesh; she knows its cost; he does not.

This is not by any means the finest passage in this extract from the larger work; but it is one of the most interesting.

* "My Own Story." By Emmeline Pankhurst. (Illustrated. London: Eveleigh Nash. Price 7s. 6d. net.)

* "Woman and War," and "The Sunlight Lay Across My Bed." By Olive Schreiner. (London: Fisher Unwin. Price 6d. net. each.)

Xmas-Gift Suggestions

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THE call this Xmas-tide is for Presents of the practical kind—especially so in regard to presents for gentlemen. That is why Peter Robinson's are making such a feature of all kinds of useful articles suitable for the purpose. Note the following suggestions—they will give you a correct idea of the kind of goods most acceptable to a man. There are presents here that will appeal equally to

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SMOKING JACKETS.—Gentlemen's Smoking Jackets in rich Velveteen, lined throughout Silk. In black, navy or brown. Each 58/6

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WOMEN'S WAR AGAINST WAR

Mrs. Pethick Lawrence writes from Washington, in a letter dated November 2:—

The Women's War Against War, a militant Peace Movement based on votes for women, was brilliantly inaugurated last night in the capital of the United States and the headquarters of the Government. A gathering of 300 invited persons, convened for business, met, endorsed entirely the Propositions drawn up, and elected a very large Executive, to be sub-divided into Finance, Press and Publicity, Hospitality, and Meetings Committees. A Conference is to be convened here in the New Year, to which the groups from other cities will be invited, and the plan of a National Campaign will then be mapped out. I have promised to remain in America for this Conference, and to speak at the Mass Meeting which will be organised in connection with it. The Hon. Sec. for Washington is Mrs. John Jay White, Studio House, Sheridan Circle. The Hon. Sec. for Boston is Mrs. Hutcheson Page, Equal Suffrage Association, 585, Boylston Street, Boston. I hope several cities will be able to be represented in January.

There is the seed of a great movement in the hearts of the people here. The women are on fire with the idea of a militant peace, a constructive and a creative peace, as the fulfilment of the emergence into political life of the makers of humanity. Men are keen too. But the respective organisations will co-operate and not run into one; for women have a new thought and a new inspiration and a new point of view that they wish to keep unimpaired, so that the issues may not be confused.

Emmeline Pethick Lawrence.

The following are the Propositions referred to in Mrs. Lawrence's letter:—

1. The reinforcement of the Democracies of the world by the inclusion of the mother-half of the human race into the ranks of articulate citizenship.
2. The creation of some constitutional machinery, where none at present exists, by which the Democracies may exercise some control over foreign policy.
3. That all treaties and alliances on the part of any Democratic nation shall be ratified by the representatives of the people.
4. That the manufacture of armaments shall be nationalised, and that the export of ammunition from one country to another shall be vetoed.
5. That the Allies shall be held to their slogan that this is a war to end war.
6. That at the conclusion of peace no province shall be transferred from one Government to another without the consent of the population concerned; that this consent shall be obtained by plebiscite, and that women, who have suffered equally with men, shall be included in the plebiscite.
7. That women as well as men should be sent as representatives of their nation to the Hague Conference.
8. That the Democracies shall press for some kind of international agreement by which all the nations shall put themselves at the back of any one law-abiding nation that is aggressively attacked, or of any small country that is menaced by a stronger power.
9. That the idea be brought to the front and the possibility discussed of the formation of an European Senate, composed of representatives of every European nation. That this Senate exist for the discussion of international concerns, and in this way a means may be constructed whereby nations can seek to obtain what is necessary to the development of their national life by bargain and by exchange, instead of by secret treachery or open slaughter and loot.

A COMPARISON OF PUNISHMENTS

To the Editors of VOTES FOR WOMEN.

Dear Editors,—I read in the *Daily News* of November 17 a case of a child found in flames who died from the results. An aunt was found in the house, with a baby, too drunk to answer questions. The police sergeant told the magistrate at Merthyr that the money for the drink seemed to be the Army allowance, and that the case had been reported. In the *Times* (October 28) there was an account of a private home from the war on sick furlough. He was charged with manslaughter of a man, whom he knocked down with a stick in a drunken fight. It was stated, with the approval of the magistrate, that the police did not propose to offer further evidence. How is it that the police are in a position to give or refuse evidence at their discretion? How is it possible for women to get justice under such a system?—Yours, &c.,

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COMPARISON OF PUNISHMENTS

LIGHT SENTENCES

Indecent Assault on a Little Girl

The Kent Messenger and Maidstone Telegraph (November 27) reports case of a bootmaker charged at the Kent Autumn Assizes before Mr. Justice Lawrence with indecently assaulting a little girl of seven. He pleaded guilty, and gave drink as an excuse.

Sentence: Twelve months' hard labour.

Criminal Assault on a Girl of Twelve

The Kent Messenger and Maidstone Telegraph (November 27) reports case of an organist charged at the Kent Assizes before Mr. Justice Lawrence with an assault upon a girl of twelve. She was now pregnant, and the defendant pleaded guilty. There was a previous conviction for forgery. The Judge said the wrong done was "almost unparalleled," but took into consideration the difficulty he would have in finding work when he came out of prison.

Sentence: Eighteen months' hard labour.

HEAVY SENTENCES

Theft of a Pair of Boots

The Kent Messenger (November 27) reports case of a bricklayer indicted at the Kent Assizes before Mr. Justice Lawrence for obtaining a pair of boots by false pretences, which he afterwards sold. He was stated to have "been in trouble before."

Sentence: Fifteen months' hard labour.

Forgery and False Pretences

The same paper reports case of a man charged at the same Assizes before the same Judge with forging a cheque for £22 18s., and obtaining clothes to the value of £4 8s. by false pretences. There were several previous convictions.

Sentence: Five years' penal servitude.

LITTLE GIRLS v. BOOTS

In another part of the paper we comment on the Cardiff court-martial which shows the helpless position of women in a country where women have no political status. The above table of comparisons reveals with tragic emphasis the helplessness of children and young girls under a system which sets a higher value upon property than upon person, upon boots than upon little girls—a standard of values that Suffragists have no hope of getting readjusted until women are placed upon a political equality with men.

In the first case every possible allowance was made for the man who had so terribly injured a little girl of seven, on the ground of his being drunk at the time. In summing up, his Lordship, as reported, said nothing of the offence committed, but spoke only of the defendant's excellent character in the past, and of his unfortunate tendency to drink, adding: "I think the kindest thing I can do for you is to sentence you to a term of imprisonment that will prevent you getting drunk, and give you an opportunity of building up some reserve of strength to resist the temptation to drink in future." Not a word of the child he had done his best to ruin—unless, of course, the newspaper from which we take this report omitted that part of the Judge's speech as uninteresting or unimportant. The maximum sentence that can be given for this offence is two years' hard labour.

The Future of a Man and a Woman

The second case reveals even more acutely how much more important the future of a man appears to be in the eyes of the Bench than the future of a woman. A girl is made a mother before she is in her teens. What future can there be before this poor little mother? Yet counsel for the defence seems to have (unrebuked) hoped that his Lordship would not "weigh against the prisoner the fact of the girl's condition, unfortunate though it was." He further laid stress upon the temptation that lay in his having to pass through her bedroom (of a child of twelve!) to get to his own, and finally begged the Judge to take as lenient a view of the case as he could because the accused would probably be unable to obtain any occupation (being a church organist and music teacher to young pupils) when he came out of gaol.

The Judge, in passing sentence of eighteen months, said he took into

consideration that the defendant would have difficulty in getting work in future. The maximum sentence for the offence committed is penal servitude for life.

Our Contention

As Suffragists we are no advocates of severe sentences as such. Most women would like to see greater humanity exercised with offenders of all kinds than is possible under our present penal system. But when sentences of fifteen months can be passed for theft of a pair of boots, and of penal servitude for forging a cheque, without any consideration being paid to the future of the unhappy man who commit these offences against property, we are forced to the conclusion that it must be because women do not count as much as boots or cheques that such a disparity can be shown in the punishments inflicted. "Previous convictions" cannot be pleaded as justification, for it was admitted in the case of the organist that he had committed the offence with which he was charged "repeatedly," besides having a previous conviction against him for another kind of offence.

MAN v. WOMAN

We are sometimes criticised for what is considered "leniency" in our attitude towards immorality in women as shown in our condemnation of the severe sentences passed on such women for solicitation. Our point, of course, is that if solicitation is a crime in women it is equally a crime in men, and our protest is directed against the injustice of making it a punishable offence for the one and not for the other.

It now appears that a similar differentiation is shown in other offences also. The Berwick Advertiser (November 20) reports a case at Berwick Petty Sessions before the Mayor (Thomas Wilson, Esq.), Captain Norman, R.N., R. Boston, Esq., D. H. W. Askew, Esq., Thos. Purves, Esq., Major Tower Robertson, Alex. Darling, Esq., and Ald. Plenderleith, in which a man and a woman were charged with behaving unlawfully in an indecent manner on the Shamble Braes, and the man, further, with assaulting the constable who arrested them.

Only Entitled to Arrest the Woman

The issue of the case does not interest us here, as sentence on the woman, who was found guilty, was deferred, while the man was fined £2 and costs, or three weeks' imprisonment, for aiding and abetting the indecency. But the point that matters to us is that in the defence of the man it came out that the police were only entitled to arrest the woman and to serve a summons on the man for aiding and abetting; he could only be arrested with a warrant. The man therefore, argued counsel, was justified in resisting his arrest!

Could greater proof exist of the inequality of men and women under the law?

COMING EVENTS

"The Unseen Realities, not Merely Future but Present and Immediate," will be the sermon on Sunday, December 6, at the Aeolian Hall, where the Rev. John Hunter, D.D., is delivering a series. The service commences at 11 a.m.

The Women's Freedom League will hold a meeting at the Suffrage Club, York Street, on Wednesday, December 9. Mr. W. L. George will speak on "Women and War." Chair: Mrs. Huntsman.

A meeting will be held by the East London Federation of the Suffragettes at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Friday, December 11. Speakers: Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, Mrs. Drake, Mrs. Walker, Mrs. Payne, Mrs. Mansell-Moullin.

The United Suffragists hold a Christmas Sale at the Eustace Miles Restaurant to-day (Friday), from 3 to 11 p.m. (For particulars of this and other U.S. fixtures, see page 74.)

A GENEROUS OFFER

One of the most practical offers made by private firms in connection with the war is that made by the proprietors of Hall's Wine. They are sending a full-sized bottle of Hall's Wine, free of all cost, to every invalid soldier or sailor who applies for it. The remarkable powers of Hall's Wine in shortening convalescence and in building up lost strength have earned the recommendation of many well-known medical men. We understand that all that is necessary to secure the full-size free bottle is for the invalid soldier or sailor to send a postcard to the proprietors, Stephen Smith and Co., Ltd., Bow, London, giving full name, address, and rank.—[ADVT.]

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All advertisements must be prepaid. To ensure insertion in our next issue, all advertisements must be received not later than Tuesday morning. Address, the Advertisement Manager, VOTES FOR WOMEN, 4-7, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, E.C.

NEXT SUNDAY'S SERVICES

HIGHER THOUGHT CENTRE, 40, Courtfield Gardens, S.W. 11.30, Mr. Paul Tyner; 7, Mrs. M. W. Wilton.

REV. JOHN HUNTER, D.D. (late Trinity Church, Glasgow). Eolian Hall, New Bond Street. Dec. 6, subject: "The Unseen Realities not Merely Future but Present and Immediate." Worship at 11 o'clock.

ST. MARY - AT - HILL. — Church Army Church, Eastcheap. Sundays, 9 and 6, views, orchestra, band. Prebendary Carlile.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

LEAGUE OF JUSTICE, 22, South Molton Street, W. Jumble Sale, Wednesday, December 9. Second-hand clothing suitable war refugees; new articles for Xmas presents. Tea. Palmistry, 3-7 and 8-10 p.m.

MEMORIAL HALL, Manchester, Monday, December 7, at 7.30 p.m., Hope Squire and Frank Merrick will play Unfamiliar Works for Two Pianos. Tickets 2s. (reserved), 2s. 6d., and 1s., from Messrs. Forsyth Bros., 126, Deansgate, and at the door.

THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE will give a Party to Belgian Refugees at Caxton Hall, Westminster, Thursday, January 7, 3.30-10 p.m. Christmas tree, buffet, musical and dramatic entertainments, and many other attractions. Admission 6d.

WOMEN AND WAR. — SERVICE of Intercession (arranged by the C.L.W.S.). Saturday, December 12, 3.0 p.m., in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square. Preacher: The Vicar, the Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard.

XMAS SHOWROOM for Children's Books, Calendars, Xmas Cards, &c., now open at No. 11, Adam Street. Special department, including tinned goods, chocolate, &c., suitable gifts for our troops at home and abroad, will be opened on Saturday next, December 6, at 3 p.m., at No. 5, Duke Street, Adelphi, and continued until Xmas. Hours, 10 a.m.—7 p.m. For the convenience of shoppers tea will be provided at 6d. each.—International Suffrage Shop, 11, Adam Street, Strand.

BOARD RESIDENCE, Etc.

ABSOLUTE Privacy, Quietude, and Refinement, no extras. At the Strand Imperial Hotel, opposite Gaiety Theatre, ladies will find the freshest, warmest, daintiest, cosiest quarters; sumptuous bedroom, with h. and c. water fitted; breakfast, bath, attendance, and lights, from 5s. 6d.; en pension 9s.; special terms for long stay; finest English provisions.—Manageress, 4788 Gerrard.

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WEST HEATH HOSTEL, Child's Hill, N.W. (near Platt's Lane). Designed to give freedom and comfort to visitors or workers. Telephone 5497 Hampstead.—Apply, Secretary.

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SMALL BEDROOM, breakfast, £1 per week.—Apply after 1.30, 9, Museum Chambers, Bury Street.

VERY convenient Furnished Flat, opposite Earl's Court Tube; 4 rooms, bathroom; hot water supplied; 27s., or offer.—Butt, 24, Creswick Walk, Hampstead Garden Suburb.

WELL-FURNISHED Bed-sitting room to let; 15s. weekly, including bath and attendance; recommended by a Suffragette.—33, Upper Montague Street, Montague Square, W.

FOR SALE, at half-price, books by Katherine Roberts: "Pages from the Diary of a Militant Suffragette," "Some Pioneers and a Prison." Excellent for propaganda work. Obtainable from Garden City Press, Ltd., Letchworth, Herts. Price, 7d. each, post free.

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SPEAKERS:

MR. GERALD GOULD, MR. GEORGE LANSBURY, MISS EVELYN SHARP,

MR. H. W. NEVINSON (Just back from —, will speak on "Children in War").

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